

Superstorm Sandy

Hughes Satellite Technology Provides Critical Communications in the Aftermath of Superstorm Sandy

On October 29, 2012, Superstorm Sandy struck the eastern seaboard, impacting states from Florida to Maine. According to the National Hurricane Center, Superstorm Sandy was the largest Atlantic hurricane recorded in history, and the second most expensive after Katrina in 2005. Destroying parts of the Caribbean, Mid-Atlantic, and Northeastern United States, Sandy caused approximately \$20 billion in damage and an estimated loss of \$50 billion in revenue from interruption to businesses.¹

The telecommunications infrastructure in these areas was also severely damaged. In fact, Superstorm Sandy knocked out approximately 25 percent of all cellphone communications across 10 states.² An estimated 800,000³ New Yorkers lost power during the storm, and the city's telecom network experienced downed landlines and cell towers. Adding to the situation, a key hub for a major telecom provider located in lower Manhattan flooded, so it was unable to provide Internet or voice communications to its customers. In fact, thousands of people remained without service even six months after the storm.⁴

But in the aftermath of Sandy, vital communications were rapidly restored in some areas by using satellite technology. Unlike terrestrial technologies that rely on ground-based infrastructure, such as cell towers that are vulnerable to being disabled or knocked out when disaster strikes, satellite provides a true alternate and robust communications path that is easy to deploy virtually anywhere using small dish antennas. Several examples highlight the important role it played.



Helping FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers in Rockaway, New York

The Rockaway and Far Rockaway areas of Queens, New York—home to between 175,000 and 200,000 people—were hit hard during the storm and had little or no communications. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) opened Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) in the area, providing much-needed information about recovery services, such as housing/rental assistance and referrals to other assisting agencies (e.g., Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Small Business Administration). With terrestrial lines down, volunteers and disaster victims couldn't make calls or apply for services online. Hughes responded promptly by providing 20 DRCs with its satellite broadband terminals and high-speed connectivity, including Voice-over-IP (VoIP), to help people obtain needed services.

Helping Habitat for Humanity to Rebuild Breezy Point, New York

More than 100 homes were lost in the Breezy Point area of New York from a six alarm fire that ensued during Superstorm Sandy. Habitat for Humanity set up a command center nearby to help coordinate the rebuilding efforts; however, no terrestrial communications were available. The Global VSAT Forum—the

¹ NOAA's National Weather Service Newport, Morehead City, NC Event Summaries/Case Studies, Oct. 29, 2012

² Peter Svensson, *Sandy Takes Out 25 PCT of Cell Towers*, AP, Oct. 30, 2012

³ *Hurricane Sandy After Action Report and Recommendations to Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg*, May 2013

⁴ Phillip Dampier, *Six Months Later, Still No Verizon Service in the Rockaways*, *Stop the Cap!*, April 8, 2013

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voice of the satellite industry—put out a call to its members, and Hughes joined in the recovery effort by providing key communications capabilities, including broadband services.

“I can still remember the day that the truck pulled up in front of our makeshift office at a gutted-out church,” said Jim Killoran, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Westchester, New York. “It was like the cavalry arriving.” Hughes provided broadband service through its Internet Access Solutions, powered by the EchoStar XVII® satellite with JUPITER™ high-throughput technology—a next-generation Ka-band satellite system with fast Internet speeds of up to 15 Mbps.

“Satellite connectivity again proved its resilience in the face of a disaster,” said Tony Bardo, Assistant Vice President of Government Solutions at Hughes. “And we were honored to have played an important part in supporting Habitat for Humanity’s noble efforts to help families rebuild their lives.”



About Hughes

Hughes is the world’s leading provider of satellite broadband, delivering innovative network technologies, managed services, and solutions for enterprises and governments globally, with more than 3.3 million systems shipped to customers in more than 100 countries. Hughes operates sales and support offices worldwide, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of EchoStar Corporation (NASDAQ: SATS). For additional information about Hughes, please visit www.hughes.com.

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An EchoStar Company

11717 Exploration Lane Germantown, MD 20876 USA